

How Good Is Your Goal-Setting?

Think back to a time when you set yourself a goal but didn't achieve it. Perhaps you planned to get fitter or learn a new language.

You probably felt frustrated when you realised that you'd failed. But did you reflect on what went wrong, and think about how you could improve next time?

Take the short quiz to explore your goal-setting approach, and to learn about some of the obstacles that can get in your way.

		Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
1	I set lots of goals in the hope that I will achieve some of them.					
2	I find that my targets are too ambitious.					
3	If I'm struggling to meet a goal, I set sub-goals to renew my motivation.					
4	I don't celebrate success until I've achieved a goal.					
5	I tie my work-related objectives to personal ambitions.					
6	I set low standards so that my goals are easy to meet.					
7	I don't ask for support from friends and if I become demotivated.					
8	I celebrate my success when I hit my targets, and I thank the people who helped me.					
9	I think about what my coach or family wants me to achieve when I set personal goals.					
10	I regularly monitor how I am doing, so that I can measure how well I'm progressing towards my goals.					
11	My personal values aren't relevant to my work-related objectives.					
12	I don't set an end date for achieving my goals, so that I give myself plenty of time.					

		Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
13	I seek out tools that help me reach my goals.					
14	When I make new plans, I reflect on my existing commitments to make sure that I don't take on too much.					
15	If I fail to meet a target, I move on without reflecting on what went wrong.					
16	I look for ways to build goals into my daily life by developing new habits.					
17	I get excited by new ideas and I flit from goal to goal without achieving anything.					
18	I enjoy planning how to achieve goals, but then get bored by the mundane work of delivering them.					

Work out your Score

1
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

2
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

3
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

4
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

5
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

6
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

7
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

8
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

9
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

10
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

11
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

12
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

13
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

14
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

15
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

16
 Not at all = 1
 Rarely = 2
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 4
 Very Often = 5

17
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

18
 Not at all = 5
 Rarely = 4
 Sometimes = 3
 Often = 2
 Very Often = 1

TOTAL	
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Score Interpretation

18-41

You probably don't meet many of your goals because you're not setting them realistically. They may be overambitious or unclear, or you might lose motivation because your goals aren't connected to your personal ambitions.

Perhaps you enjoy planning your goals but get bored by the day-to-day work needed to achieve them, or you may flit from one goal to another without ever achieving any of them.

Whatever the reason, don't let your past experiences dent your confidence. Improve your goal-setting skills and boost your chances of achieving your goals by following the advice below. You'll be back on track in no time!

42-66

Although you meet some of your goals – which may be those that are most connected to your values and long-term plans – you sometimes fall short on others.

Do you find that you get overwhelmed by other commitments as you progress towards a goal, do you struggle with self-discipline, or, do you find it hard to form new habits when working towards your goals?

Read some tips below to find out how to overcome these obstacles and boost your self-motivation.

56-75

Congratulations – you set yourself realistic goals, and you've found plenty of ways to support yourself as you work towards them. Your friends and family are likely to admire you for the way you set yourself targets and work diligently to meet them.

Don't forget that experience can be the best teacher. Reflect on previous successes and failures to make sure that you continue to set SMART goals.

You're in a great position to offer advice to others on goal setting. Look at the tips below for ideas on how to you can tailor your guidance.

Tips to Improve Your Goal-Setting

Preparing to Set Goals (Questions 1, 5, 6, 9, 11)

Many people miss out this stage when they set goals, and they struggle later as a result. The planning step is essential because you need to tie your personal goals to your personal values and dreams (and not to the goals and dreams of other people). This will help to motivate you when times get tough.

Forming Goals (Questions 2, 10, 12, 14)

You are probably familiar with the idea of goal setting, but how do you make sure that your goals are SMART?

Spend some time imagining the positive impact that achieving your goals will have on your life.

Also, think about the times when you haven't been successful. Reflect on what went wrong, and whether there was anything you could have done differently – then take what you've learned and apply it to your new goals.

Motivation (Questions 3, 4, 7, 13, 16, 17, 18)

There are plenty of ways that you can support yourself if you start to lose motivation during a tough patch.

Look for some quick wins right from the start. Keep working towards your goals by building them into your habits, and "park" other good ideas until you can do something about them – this will help you keep on top of multiple goals without getting distracted by exciting new ideas.

If you lose motivation, explore what is making you feel demotivated. Do you struggle with self-discipline, a lack of time or a drifting sense of purpose? Redesign your goals around your time commitments if you need to or create smaller sub-goals to give yourself some "easy wins" to boost your enthusiasm.

It's also OK to ask for support from friends or family. For example, you may want them to remind you of your bigger-picture dreams when you're finding things tough.

And remember: change is difficult, even when you're working towards something you want.

Achieving Goals (Questions 8, 15)

As you get nearer to your goal, plan how you'll celebrate success. This will spur you on to cross the finishing line!

You need to make time to recognise and enjoy your achievement - for your own sake, as well as to thank those who have supported you along the way.

After you've acknowledged your success, take time to reflect on the process of achieving your goal. Think about what you found tough, what went wrong, and what went better than you expected. Build that self-knowledge into your future goal-planning.